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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "TESTING FINDS VINYL CHLORIDE IN FIVE CROOKED RIVER  
WELLS" NSB KINGS BAY GA  
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CAMDEN COUNTY TRIBUNE

# Testing finds vinyl chloride in five Crooked River wells

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By Linn Hudson  
Editor

Testing of 51 private wells in the Crooked River Plantation subdivision in St. Marys revealed five wells are contaminated by vinyl chloride.

At a public hearing on Dec. 17, U.S. Navy and ABB Environmental Services Inc. officials released results of well testing which occurred over the past two months. While officials did not publicly disclose which private wells tested positive, homeowners with contaminated wells on their property were notified.

The tests were conducted following the disclosure that vinyl chloride, a known carcinogen, is believed to be leaking from the old Camden County landfill which is located on property now owned by Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base.

Recent testing indicates that a contaminated area of groundwater has moved west from the old landfill to approximately 750 feet west of Georgia Highway Spur 40 in the subdivision.

Captain Len Scullion, base public works supervisor, told a group of approximately 50 homeowners on Thursday night that 144 groundwater samples were collected around the landfill and within the subdivision. The tests were conducted on water samples from depths of five to 72 feet.

Within Crooked River Plantation, 51 samples were taken

from private wells. Sixteen of the samples revealed volatile organic compounds, but only five are believed to be related to the

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# Testing: Officials said

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groundwater contamination.

Officials continued to urge residents not to use their wells since potential health risks have not been determined.

"We do not know what the results of those tests might be," said Scullion, adding that it is "prudent not to use" the wells until the health risks are defined.

Officials also said the continued use of private wells will increase the area of contamination and could cause the "plume" of contaminated groundwater to move towards wells which would not be affected by the plume's natural movement.

"By using the wells, we have the potential to move the plume unnaturally," Scullion said. "We're concerned about that."

Based on information gathered to this point, the plume is expected to continue migrating west, Scullion said.

Air testing also conducted in the Crooked River area indicated no traces of airborne vinyl chloride. Water and soil samples from Porcupine Lake in the subdivision did not reveal traces of vinyl chloride.

All homes in the Crooked River subdivision are connected to the city water system which is not contaminated by vinyl chloride. Most of the private wells tested at Crooked River were installed by homeowners for lawn irrigation purposes, and few have reported using the well water for consumption.

Vinyl chloride, a chemical used in drycleaning, is a known cause

of cancer if persons are exposed at high levels. Since the water is used for irrigation and not for consumption, health risks associated with exposure to the contaminated water are not known.

Mike Murphy, senior technical reviewer for ABB Environmental, said a team of toxicologists and health specialists are

## contamination is slowly moving west

examining the potential health risks. After the nature and magnitude of the risks are determined, a plan to address the leak will be developed.

In January, samples will be taken from approximately 12 private wells which were missed in the first round of testing, Scullion said. Following the

completion of testing, Navy and ABB Environmental, the firm contracted by the Navy to conduct testing, will evaluate and interpret test results.

According to a chart distributed to residents, officials expect that process to continue until February. ABB Environmental and the Navy will then submit

results to state and national environmental regulatory agencies.

After the regulatory reviews, officials will begin focusing on a plan to address the clean-up of the contaminated area. The process of determining and conducting clean-up measures could take several years, officials admit.

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